WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An information display device comprising:

a display having a display screen on which information on an apparatus is displayed;

an input means including an operation switch through which operation control of the apparatus is performed and outputting a switch signal when said operation switch is operated;

a proximity detector that detects that an operator's hand comes in a range which is a predetermined distance away from said input means; and

a menu display controller that causes a hierarchical menu showing an operation item group of the apparatus to be displayed on said display screen in response to the switch signal from said input means when the operator's hand comes in range, and terminates menu display when the operator's hand is taken off said input means.

2. An information display device according to claim 1, further comprising:

a counter that counts a period of time during which the operator's hand is in the range; and

a delay time setting means for setting, based on the counted period of time, a delay time that is a period of time from an instant at which the operator's hand is taken off said input means until the menu display is terminated,

wherein, when the operator's hand is taken off said input means, said menu display controller terminates the menu display after the set delay time has passed.

3. An information display device according to claim 2,

wherein said delay time setting means sets the delay time longer as a level of a displayed menu is lower in hierarchy, when a plurality of menus are provided in a hierarchical manner on lower hierarchical levels

of an initial menu that is a menu displayed when the operator's hand comes in the range.

4. An information display device according to claim 2, further comprising:

an operation history memory that stores an operation history based on the inputted switch signal,

wherein said delay time setting means sets the delay time based on the operation history.

5. An information display device according to claim 3, further comprising:

an operation history memory that stores an operation history based on the inputted switch signal,

wherein said delay time setting means sets the delay time based on the operation history.

6. An information display device according to claim 2, further comprising:

an operation completion detector that detects operation completion of the apparatus,

wherein said delay time setting means sets the delay time shorter when the operation of the apparatus is completed than when the operation of the apparatus is not completed.

7. An information display device according to claim 3, further comprising:

an operation completion detector that detects operation completion of the apparatus,

wherein said delay time setting means sets the delay time shorter when the operation of the apparatus is completed than when the operation of the apparatus is not completed.

8. An information display device according to claim 4, further comprising:

an operation completion detector that detects operation completion of the apparatus,

wherein said delay time setting means sets the delay time shorter when the operation of the apparatus is completed than when the operation of the apparatus is not completed.

9. An information display device according to claim 5 further comprising:

an operation completion detector that detects operation completion of the apparatus,

wherein said delay time setting means sets the delay time shorter when the operation of the apparatus is completed than when the operation of the apparatus is not completed.